

Message Text

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PAGE 01 TRIPOL 00735 190914Z
ACTION NEA-11

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 DOE-15 SOE-02 EB-08 COME-00
TRSE-00 OMB-01 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 CIAE-00
INR-10 NSAE-00 L-03 AGRE-00 /090 W
-----034859 200452Z /62
R 181405Z MAY 78
FM AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5511
INFO AMEMBASSY SOFIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L TRIPOLI 0735

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, LY, BU
SUBJECT: LIBYAN-BULGARIAN RELATIONS

1. DURING RECENT MEETING (MAY 17) NEWLY ARRIVED BULGARIAN
AMBASSADOR TO TRIPOLI, VLADIMIR MEDAROV, DESCRIBED LIBYAN-
BULGARIAN RELATIONS AS LARGELY ECONOMIC AND WITH LIMITED
POLITICAL CONTENT.

2. HE OBSERVED THAT THERE WERE ALMOST 8,000 BULGARIANS
WORKING IN LIBYA IN VARIOUS CAPACITIES. A SMALL COMPONENT
OF THEM WERE PROFESSIONALS IN SUCH FIELDS AS MEDICINE AND
ENGINEERING BUT THE BULK WERE EMPLOYED BY BULGARIAN STATE
COMPANIES ENGAGED IN CONSTRUCTION ACTIVITY FOR LIBYAN
GOVERNMENT. BULGARIA'S MAIN EXPORTS TO LIBYA ARE MEAT
AND OTHER FOOD PRODUCTS. BULGARIA RECEIVES ONLY 5 PERCENT
OF ITS OIL FROM LIBYA.

3. THE AMBASSADOR DESCRIBED HIMSELF AS AN AMATEUR DIPLOMAT
ON HIS FIRST ASSIGNMENT. BY PROFESSION HE IS A CHEMICAL
ENGINEER AND HAS SPENT THE BULK OF HIS CAREER IN BULGARIA'S
PETRO-CHEMICAL INDUSTRY. JUST PRIOR TO HIS ASSIGNMENT TO
LIBYA HE HELD THE POST OF DEPUTY MINISTER FOR PETRO-
CHEMICAL MATTERS. LIKE MOST DIPLOMATS, AMBASSADOR MEDAROV
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PAGE 02 TRIPOL 00735 190914Z

FINDS LIFE IN TRIPOLI DIFFICULT. HIS MAIN PROBLEM COMES
FROM THE LARGE BULGARIAN COMMUNITY WHOSE CONTINUING
ATTEMPTS TO REMEDY THE LOCAL ALCOHOL SHORTAGE WITH HOMEMADE
PRODUCTS RUN INTO TROUBLE WITH LIBYAN AUTHORITIES.
AMBASSADOR NOTED THAT HE HAD TRAVELED SEVERAL TIMES TO THE
US IN CONNECTION WITH HIS PROFESSIONAL INTEREST IN PETRO-
CHEMICAL MATTERS AND HAS FOND MEMORIES OF SUCH VISITS.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 jan 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: REPORTS, FOREIGN RELATIONS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 18 may 1978
Decaption Date: 20 Mar 2014
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1978TRIPOL00735
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D780212-0594
Format: TEL
From: TRIPOLI
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1978/newtext/t19780542/aaaabjum.tel
Line Count: 63
Litigation Code IDs:
Litigation Codes:
Litigation History:
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Message ID: d0598c9a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 2
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: ONLY
Reference: n/a
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 may 2005
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 2645199
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: LIBYAN-BULGARIAN RELATIONS
TAGS: PEPR, LY, BU
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/d0598c9a-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Sheryl P. Walter
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
20 Mar 2014
Markings: Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014